12 2

IRELAND.

K

THE

CATHOLIC QUESTION

CONSIDERED:

IN A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE

Editor of the Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine.

Σωσαι την νησον—τι εμποδων; ουκ εξεσι; μνησικακησειν, νη Δια, προς τους βελομενους σωζεσθαι, και προφασεις ζητειν, δι' ας απαντα προησομεθα τα συμφεροντα;

Preſerve this Iſland—What prevents you? Are *you not pledged by the very laws which you have enacted?* In God's name ſhall we continue to cheriſh animoſities in a country upon the brink of deſtruction, and anxious to be ſaved? Shall we be buſied in ſeeking pretexts to deprive ourſelves of the greateſt advantages, and to betray our deareſt intereſts?

DEMOSTHENES.

London:

PRINTED BY SAMPSON LOW,

N°. 7, BERWICK STREET, SOHO;

SOLD BY

E. BOOKER, NEW BOND STREET; AND T. HURST, PATER-NOSTER ROW.

1800.

G.R. III.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following pages were written with a view to inſertion in the Anti-Jacobin Magazine.—They were ſent too late to have appeared in the laſt Number, and the Author takes this opportunity of acknowledging the liberal politeneſs which he experienced on the occaſion, from the Gentleman to whom they are addreſſed. Having been conſiderably extended, in the courſe of a few leiſure moments ſnatched from more ſerious avocation, they are ſubmitted to the Public in the form of a Pamphlet, and ſhould they engage curioſity, may probably be continued.

ERRATA.

Page 8, line 2, *for* " in Dublin" *read* " of Dublin."
— 10, note, *for* " well known" *read* " little known."
— 13, line 20, *begin the ſentence with* " Upon," *and after* " compelled" *read* " I fear," *and dele* " I greatly fear."
— 15, — 15, *after* " philoſophy" *read* " the moſt perfect harmony is eſſential among thoſe who in ſuch a warfare are natural allies."
— 21, — 1, *for* " Tried" *read* " Trial."
— 30, note, *inſtead of* " councils" *read* " counſels."

LETTER, &c.

ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR OF THE ANTI-JACOBIN REVIEW.

SIR,

YOUR obſervations on the ſubject matter of an anonymous pamphlet entitled, "*Legal Arguments, &c. on the Excluſion of the Roman Catholic Nobility and Gentry in both Kingdoms from Parliament,*" are candid and liberal *. It gives me great ſatisfaction to find you impreſſed with the ne-

* Vide the Anti-Jacobin Review for November 1799. It will be neceſſary to peruſe the criticiſm therein contained on the pamphlet to which I have alluded, in order that the reader may be able more fully to comprehend the nature of the preſent letter.

ceſſity of more profound diſcuſſion, as to the expediency of relieving the conſciences of Roman Catholics, in relation to the oaths and declarations required by the laws of Great Britain and of Ireland from all Members of Parliament, previouſly to the diſcharge of Parliamentary Duty. To me, the ſubject has ever appeared to concern materially the general welfare of the Empire, and in the preſent ſituation of political affairs, to demand moſt ſerious attention.

Conſidering myſelf to be included in your general invitation, I purpoſe on the preſent occaſion and alſo in future, to offer to yourſelf and to the public a few obſervations on what is called the *Catholic Queſtion*. At the ſame time I muſt premiſe, that in entering upon this important ſubject, I am actuated ſolely by a deſire of promoting unanimity and harmony throughout the Britiſh Empire, and of contributing as far as in me lies, to preſerve, if not to reſcue, a fair, an invaluable portion of it from the dire contagion of Jacobinical principles. Such, Sir, are the motives which have induced me to obtrude upon the public attention. I make but one requeſt; which is, that the following pages be not cenſured as *declamatory*, merely upon

the firſt peruſal, and without an attentive conſideration of their contents. I ſhall endeavour to reaſon and to convince, not to ſeduce or to inflame. The ſubject which you have propoſed for diſcuſſion is certainly delicate. It intereſts the feelings; it has to encounter prejudice; it has too often excited paſſion. I wiſh to be moderate and impartial; I am alſo particularly anxious to avoid giving offence either to Proteſtant or to Catholic. Both have equal claims to my reſpect, and I ſhall ſtrive to make no remarks on either, which ſhall not be founded in truth, or warranted by the reſpective ſituations of both parties. Having made theſe preliminary obſervations, I ſhall proceed, in purſuance of the deſire which you have expreſſed, to conſider the queſtion principally as it relates to the Siſter Kingdom.

In Ireland, a *prodigious majority* of His Majeſty's ſubjects, and a moſt conſiderable part of the *commercial community*, profeſs the Roman Catholic Religion. They are, in conſequence of adherence to their religion, debarred from enjoying the glorious privileges which the Conſtitution of the Britiſh Monarchy extends, with very few exceptions, to all claſſes of Britiſh ſubjects, and

which it has annexed to the poſſeſſion of property, not only as the *beſt ſecurity* of public order, but at the ſame time as the brilliant reward of *induſtrious exertion*. In a country ſo peculiarly favoured by nature in richneſs of ſoil, in abundant population, and in facility of communication with the colonies and with foreign ſtates; a country of ſuch *capability*, containing ſo many valuable reſources, from which it is poſſible, and I hope *intended* alſo, to draw incalculable advantages, the excluſion of ſo great a majority of its inhabitants from the full benefits of the Conſtitution preſents an aſpect ſerious indeed; and, as you have well obſerved, very different from that in which it is generally beheld by the public of Great Britain.

In Great Britain the Roman Catholics, however reſpectable in rank and landed property, are by no means conſiderable in number. They conſiſt of ſix Members of the Houſe of Peers*, of two Peers of Scotland, ſeveral

* This appellation, as applied to the Engliſh Roman Catholic Peers, may require ſome explanation.

The Peers of England who profeſs the Roman Catholic Religion, are, when of full age, according to the *fundamental principles* of the Britiſh Conſtitution, *Members*

ſeveral gentlemen of antient and diſtinguiſhed families, with a part of their tenantry, chiefly

bers of the Houſe of *Peers* in every Parliament. They regularly receive *writs of ſummons* in virtue of their dignities, whenever a Parliament is to be holden, and they could never be entitled to ſuch *writs of ſummons*, were they not amongſt the number of its conſtituent *Members*. No doubt can ariſe reſpecting their conſtitutional character, from the circumſtance that they have not taken the oaths, and ſubſcribed the declarations. By taking the oaths, and ſubſcribing the declarations, which they are not prevented from doing by *any legal incapacity*, they may vote at any time and on any queſtion; and the *right* of taking the oaths, and of ſubſcribing the declarations, neceſſarily implies, that thoſe in whom ſuch a right exiſts are previouſly *Members*. The 30 C. 2. ſt. 2, itſelf proves, that to become a Member of the Houſe of Peers it is not neceſſary to take the oaths, and ſubſcribe the declaration. But what eſtabliſhes incontrovertibly that the Catholic Peers of England are *Members of the Houſe of Peers*, is ſtatute 31 Geo. 3. c. 32. ſect. 20, where they are deſcribed by the very *ſame* appellation which I have given them.

It may be worth while to remark, that the right of franking letters is given by *act of Parliament*; viz. 4 Geo. 3. c. 24, to "any Member of either of the two Houſes of Parliament." This right commences under the ſtatute *before* Parliament is aſſembled, and *before* any Member of the Houſe of Peers *can* take the oaths or ſubſcribe the declaration.

The Peers of England are Members of the Houſe of Peers by *deſcent* or by *creation*. The Peers of Scotland by

chiefly of an inferior deſcription.—of a few very worthy individuals, and of ſome induſtrious tradeſmen and artiſans in different towns. As a *commercial* body, the Engliſh Catholics are inconſiderable indeed: there is not on the Royal Exchange of London a ſingle Roman Catholic Britiſh Merchant of Engliſh deſcent. To the Roman Catholics of England you very candidly, and with many handſome compliments admit, that "*all they aſk might with propriety be conceded.*" I hope Parliament in the preſent ſeſſion will confirm your opinion, and that His Majeſty's Miniſters will no longer heſitate to adopt, with reſpect to the Roman Catholics of Great Britain, the ſame liberal ſentiments with which you ſeem impreſſed. I am convinced that were His Majeſty's Miniſters to propoſe immediately to Parliament a further relief of the Engliſh Roman Catholics, they would materially advance the moſt important intereſts of the Empire. By ſuch conduct they would infallibly at once procure the full confidence of the Iriſh Nation; ſuch

by *election*, and therefore of theſe only the ſixteen elect are Members of the Houſe of Peers in Parliament.

Peers of England, while minors, are not entitled to *writs of ſummons*.

ingenuous

ingenuous conduct would be a pledge that the future intentions of Miniſtry towards the Catholics of Ireland are ſincere. It would convince the latter, that under a Legiſlative Union, their ſituation muſt *ipſo facto* be ameliorated. The proſpect of advantage, which it is wiſhed the Catholics of Ireland ſhould behold in the project of Union, would appear to them *real*, not imaginary or deluſive. Thoſe who have already diſplayed ſentiments friendly to the project in the abſtract, would be confirmed in their wiſhes, and in their endeavours alſo, to promote its ſucceſs. The many who have hitherto reſerved all declaration of their opinions, from an apprehenſion of being hereafter deceived in their expectations, would eagerly come forward to co-operate with His Majeſty's Miniſters; even thoſe, who have expreſſed themſelves adverſe to the Union, perhaps from a conviction that it is deviſed merely as an expedient to evade granting them the relief to which they conſider themſelves juſtly entitled, (and no means have hitherto been adopted to induce them to believe the contrary) might ſtill incline to give the deſired meaſure their ſupport. Miniſtry have ſhown themſelves, by no means indifferent to the opi-

nions

nions entertained without the walls of the Parliament-houſe in Dublin—they have had reaſons for their conduct in this particular—they have acted perhaps wiſely.—Whatever may eventually reſult from the deliberations of the Iriſh Parliament, I think it will be admitted, that ſhould the preliminary queſtion of Union be carried in the affirmative, it is however ſtill deſirable that the buſineſs ſhoud proceed through all its ſtages with as little difficulty, with as little ferment, as may be poſſible; and that the Catholics of Ireland, who form the great majority of the Nation, and whoſe intereſts are conſequently ſo deeply concerned, ſhould be induced to view with confidence the particular terms, as well as the abſtract propoſal. But while the Catholic claims in England, which cannot be ſaid to be in the leaſt connected with any other queſtion of internal policy, are wholly neglected—while Members of the Houſe of Peers profeſſing the Roman Catholic Religion are obliged to ſue in courts of law for rights acknowledged to exiſt in the Catholic Peers of Ireland, under Acts of Parliament contained in words preciſely the *ſame*, and under circumſtances exactly *ſimilar*, can it be reaſonably expected, that the Catholics

Catholics of Ireland ſhould unanimouſly place implicit confidence in vague inſinuations, or in ambiguous aſſurances, unaccompanied by any acts evincing ſincerity?—Can this be expected, I repeat, while thoſe who have the facility and the means, who have to contend with no *local prejudices* or *intereſts* omit, to uſe a mild expreſſion, to do what by impartial and unprejudiced men can be conſidered but as juſtice to the Catholics of England.

Sir, I do not mean to dwell on the Catholic queſtion, as it may preſent itſelf in England. In regard to the Catholics of England, the author of the Arguments on this ſubject appears to me to have ſufficiently eſtabliſhed his caſe; I ſhall therefore proceed to examine your obſervations with reſpect to the Catholics of Ireland.

In Ireland, the Catholics, to uſe your own expreſſion, are "*prodigiouſly the majority.*" It is the fact, and undeniable.* You apprehend

* In order to give the Engliſh reader ſome ideas of the diſproportion between Catholics and Proteſtants in Ireland with reſpect to numbers, I ſhall quote an authority which will not be ſuſpected of partiality to the former. "It happened to me, in the Year 1783, to canvaſs the

hend alſo, that a majority of that majority are ill diſpoſed. Whether the apprehenſion which you expreſs be founded or groundleſs, it will not be neceſſary at preſent to examine. That a majority of the Catholics of Ireland are *not content*, I will admit: that they are *ill diſpoſed*, is a propoſition which I cannot affirm. In the late rebellion, Catholics fought, in ſupport of his Majeſty's Government, and in conſiderable numbers, againſt *Catholics*. The promoters, and the principal leaders of the Rebellion were chiefly Proteſtants, or Preſbyterians, *not* Catholics. From the circumſtance that the deluded mul-

County in which I live, and on an eſtate which had been newly ſet, at £.26,000 a Year, as I recollect I found but five Proteſtant Tenants." Speech of Lord Fitzgibbon (now Earl of Clare) Lord High Chancellor of Ireland, in the Iriſh Houſe of Lords, January 10, 1793.

This quotation may ſerve alſo to convey ſome idea of the increaſe of property among Catholics. Suppoſe on the Eſtate alluded to by the Earl of Clare, that the five Proteſtant tenants hold to the amount of £.6000 per Annum, ſtill however, on a ſingle eſtate, £.20,000 is farmed out to Catholics? It is to be obſerved alſo, that leaſes in Ireland are uſually for long terms of Years, and frequently for lives, with covenants for perpetual renewal; a mode of leaſing well known in England. Vide Cowper's Reports, Cooke v. Booth p. 819.

titudes profeſſed the Roman Catholic Religion, no arguments can be drawn to criminate the whole body.

In thoſe parts which became the bloody ſcenes of Rebellion, it was impoſſible that the deluded ſhould not have conſiſted principally of Catholics, as they form the population of the country, which may be ſaid to be Catholic. I will, however, take it for granted, if you pleaſe, that the propoſition ſtated, namely, that a majority of the Iriſh Nation are ill diſpoſed, is true; but if it be ſo, you will, I am ſure, on your ſide admit with me, that the truth is moſt ſerious—moſt alarming—and that it becomes an important duty to inveſtigate the cauſes of the ſuppoſed evil diſpoſition—to examine what remedies may be applied—and to deviſe means by which the public mind may be converted to a proper ſenſe. To be content with merely declaiming upon what every friend of ſocial order muſt lament, as a moſt dire calamity, is ineffectual: to exult in its exiſtence, to take delight in aggravating the evil by exaggeration, and by the aſſiduous propagation of every invective which the moſt virulent malice can ſuggeſt againſt the whole body of

a Nation, would argue ſomething worſe than folly or madneſs.

The Author of the Pamphlet, to which I have already alluded, has explained, why Jacobiniſm has produced in Ireland the dreadful effects deſigned beyond all doubt, but happily fruſtrated in Great Britain.* The progreſs of Jacobinical principles in England, he appears to me to have traced to its true ſource: namely, to the eſſential difference between the *ſpirit* of Government in Ireland, and in Great Britain; to the deficiency of the preſent ſyſtem of Iriſh Government compared with the ſuperior excellence of our own; and to the nature of the laws, under which Ireland has till lately been governed. His idea however concifely expreſſed, is in my opinion juſt; and I purpoſe hereafter, to enter into a full diſcuſſion of the ſubject myſelf, in an Inquiry into the Cauſes and Hiſtory of Iriſh Jacobiniſm. The deſcription which the Author in queſtion has given of the Popery Laws, however boldly delineated, however melancholy to reflection, is unfortunately not exaggerated.

* Vide Legal Arguments, pages 32 and 33.

On

On the contrary, if we attentively peruſe the Statute Book of England, and I am ſorry to add *our own* (for *we* have had no inconſiderable ſhare in the perſecution of the Iriſh Catholic) we ſhall be obliged to confeſs, although perhaps reluctantly, that the Popery Laws of Ireland obviouſly tended "*to diſſolve every ſocial tie, to pervert human nature, to extirpate all induſtry, all morality, and all religion; without which, no ſtate can enjoy happineſs, or even exiſtence: and effectually to prevent all moral and political improvement whatever in the country.*" p. 29.

Let us be candid, let us diveſt ourſelves for a moment of religious, or of national prejudice, and let us examine whether it be a true aſſertion, that until the acceſſion of his preſent Majeſty, the Iriſhman has had but little to attach him to the laws of his Country. I greatly fear, Sir, that upon an impartial inveſtigation we ſhall be compelled to acknowledge, that inſtead of granting him *protection*, they goaded him with *oppreſſion*; that inſtead of communicating to him the freedom enjoyed by the people of Great Britain, and the grand privileges, which at the ſame time that they preſerve

our

our liberties, rivet our affections to the Conſtitution of the Monarchy; the laws of Ireland deprived the Iriſhman of the moſt ſacred rights of nature.

The inſpection, Sir, which I am about to make is painful, but it is eſſential. The wounds of Ireland muſt be *probed*, otherwiſe they can never be healed. Some State empirics, I am well aware, would inſiſt at once on amputation. But amputation, or in other words *cutting off*, is an operation at beſt dangerous, always deſperate. It is the firſt ſtep with the unfeeling ſanguinary monſter—ever the laſt with the mild, the gentle, and the ſkilful chirurgeon. Let us then proceed to a brief review of the former laws of Ireland, in relation to religion, education, property, and to the adminiſtration of juſtice.

So great is the influence of religion on the human mind, ſhe diſpoſes the heart to ſuch admirable obedience, ſhe binds in ſuch firm reſtraint the deſtructive paſſions of man, that it is the intereſt, as well as the duty of every Chriſtian ſtate, to cultivate the religion of its ſubjects. Wherever there exiſts a ſenſe of religion, you will ever find peculiar attachment to order. Religion has never been diſ-

turbed

turbed or eradicated in any country, but we find that confuſion, treaſon, and rebellion, have invariably enſued. Theſe truths are notorious, but they are ſerious: they deſerve alſo very deep meditation. The dreadful progreſs of total irreligion in Ireland is admitted. You expreſs your concern at the woful circumſtance; but I think you are miſtaken in the cauſe to which you would aſcribe it. The reaſons of my diſſent from you in this inſtance I ſhall ſtate on a future occaſion. I muſt however obſerve, that in a conteſt which requires the general coalition of Chriſtendom againſt the aſſaults of an impious philoſophy, it is eſſential, that there ſhould exiſt the greateſt harmony and the moſt intimate connection between thoſe, who in ſuch a warfare are the moſt natural allies. To point out to the enemy the moſt *vulnerable* parts, and the points which are moſt *aſſailable*, would argue at beſt indiſcretion. That you have fallen involuntarily into an error of this kind, you will, I am ſure, acknowledge, when you next read over with attention the concluding ſentences of the criticiſm which has produced the preſent pages. But, Sir, *I* aſcribe the fatal prevalence in Ireland of infidelity, with its numerous train

of

of evils, to what appears to me the certain, nay, the indiſputable cauſe, to the neglect of the Iriſh Government in protecting the national religion of its ſubjects. Since the firſt introduction of Chriſtianity into Ireland, the Roman Catholic religion has always been and continues to be in that country, the national religion; that is to ſay, the religion profeſſed by a "prodigious majority," and the *prodigious* majority of a nation, according to my ideas, form the country. Now in what manner has the State diſcharged in Ireland the ſolemn duty of protecting the general religion of the country? I anſwer, and with the Statute Book in my hand, by rendering the profeſſion of the general religion of the country a *civil crime*, and by puniſhing the adherents of that general religion, *merely on account of their religion*, with pains and penalties, and with the deprivation of their moſt invaluable birth-rights. Let us not be ſurpriſed, Sir, even if all reſpect for religion ſhould have fled from Ireland, when we conſider that the laws of the State, inſtead of granting to the general religion of its ſubjects protection and ſupport, inſtead of encouraging its influence and promoting obedience to its precepts, uſed every means to render

render it contemptible and odious; and that during a long ſeries of years the attention of every ſucceſſive adminiſtration was principally directed to its extermination. Such has been the nature of the laws of Ireland with reſpect to the national religion; volumes might have been written in commenting on this head, but I content myſelf with barely ſtating incontrovertible facts. I ſhall therefore proceed.

In order to attach the Iriſhman to property, and ſuch an attachment after religion is the beſt ſecurity of public order, the laws began by ſanctioning robbery and plunder; and not content with depriving him of the moſt precious appurtenances annexed to the little which he was ſtill permitted to enjoy, he was prevented firſt by an Engliſh Statute*, from purchaſing with the earnings of induſtry the forfeited eſtates of his family; and afterwards, in the language of the Statute Book of Ireland, from purchaſing "*either in his own name, or in the name of any other perſons in truſt for him, any lands or hereditaments, or any rents or profits out of the ſame, or any leaſes or terms thereof, other than terms of years not*

* 1 Ann. ſt. 1. c. 32.

exceeding thirty-one years, whereon a rent not leſs than two thirds of the improved yearly value, at the time of making ſuch leaſe, ſhould be reſerved during ſuch term;" and by the ſame ſtatute *all eſtates, &c. to be bought, &c. for any perſon or perſons profeſſing the Popiſh religion*, that was *for the bulk of the nation*, were declared *void*. St. 2 Ann. c. 6. ſect. 8.—I omit the gavelling clauſe of the ſame act, ſect. 12, enacted, it is to be ſuppoſed, to inculcate reſpect for primogeniture. I omit alſo the clauſe diſabling the Papiſt, *i. e.* the bulk of the nation, from taking the uſufructuary benefit of lands, under any deviſe or remainder. Sec. 9.—I omit alſo other laws reſpecting property, equally if not more oppreſſive. I cannot however forbear to refer you to ſtat. 7 W. 3: c. 5. ſect. 9. wherein you will find that no Papiſt was rendered capable "of keeping in his poſſeſſion, or in the poſſeſſion of any other perſon to his uſe, or at his diſpoſition, any horſe, gelding, or mare, which ſhould be of the value of five pounds *."

* I recollect having heard that this law was put into execution ſome years ago, and that a gentleman, I think in the neighbourhood of Cork, was obliged to train bullocks to his carriage.

To provide for the education of a country where the inhabitants conſiſted principally of Roman Catholics, it was enacted by 7 W. 3. c. 5. ſect. 9. "*That no perſon of the Popiſh religion ſhould publicly teach, ſchool, or inſtruct youth, or in private houſes teach or inſtruct youth, upon pain of* 20*l. and alſo of being committed to priſon for three months for every ſuch offence.*" That by 7 W. 3. c. 4. ſect. 1. "*In caſe any child were ſent beyond ſeas, to the intent to be reſident or trained up in any priory, abbey, monaſtery, Popiſh univerſity, college, or ſchool, ſuch child, and thoſe ſending him, ſhould be diſabled to proſecute any action, &c. or to be guardian, or executor, or adminiſtrator, or capable of any legacy, or deed of gift, or to bear any office within the realm, ſhould forfeit all his goods and chattels which he or any other perſon or perſons ſhould have in truſt for him, and ſhould forfeit all his lands and hereditaments, offices and eſtate of freehold, and all truſts, powers, and intereſts therein during his life*;" that by 8 Ann. c. 13. ſect. 16, "*Whatſoever perſon of the Popiſh religion ſhould publicly teach ſchool, or ſhould inſtruct youth in learning in any private houſe, ſhould be eſteemed a Popiſh regular*

clergyman, and ſhould be proſecuted as ſuch, and incur the ſame penalties." Theſe penalties were, by 9 W. 3. c. 26. ſect. 1. "*to ſuffer impriſonment, and remain in priſon till they were tranſported out of His Majeſty's dominions, wherever His Majeſty or the Chief Governors of the kingdom ſhould think fit, and upon return from tranſportation to incur the guilt of High Treaſon.*"

Sir, when you read ſuch laws as thoſe which I have juſt quoted, you will agree with me, I am perſuaded, in opinion, that the ignorance of the Iriſhman claims our pity, and deſerves not our reproach.

I ſhall ſay nothing of elective franchiſe, nor of Parliament, nor of laws diſabling from following liberal profeſſions; but I ſhall obſerve, that one of the moſt invaluable birthrights of Engliſhmen is, Trial by Jury. This mode of trial, *conſtitutional* when confined to its original inſtitution, namely, to the *finding facts*, without invading the province of the Judge, who is to decide according to *his* oath upon the *law*, is juſtly eſteemed to uſe the expreſſion of Sir W. Blackſtone, the *glory* of Engliſh Juriſprudence. It is alſo a mode of trial emphatically deſcribed in the technical language of the

the law, to be *Tried by the Country*. An alien in any ſuit to which he is party with a native, and in all criminal caſes, hath been immemorially allowed the privilege of having aliens impannelled on the Jury. This privilege was held ſacred in the earlieſt and moſt barbarous periods of our hiſtory. It was a privilege which even the *Saxon* conceded to the *Briton**. By the 6 Ann. c. 1, ſect. 5, it was enacted, " that *in all trials of iſſues on any preſentment, indictment, or information, or action, on any of the Popery Laws, it ſhould and might be lawful to and for the proſecutor or plaintiff, to challenge any Papiſt returned as juror to try the ſame, and aſſign for cauſe that the perſon ſo returned to ſerve was a Papiſt, which challenge the Court ſhould allow, and adjudge the ſame to be a good and loyal challenge*:" and by 29 Geo. 2. c. 6. ſect. 12. no Papiſt could ſerve on Juries in actions between Proteſtants and Papiſts. I ſhall forbear to mention how late the laſt mentioned act was enforced, was revived, was continued, was made perpetual, and was at length repealed.

* Statute of King Ethelred de Monticolis Walliæ, cap. 3.

I ſhall

I ſhall no longer treſpaſs on your patience by referring to what were called the Popery laws of Ireland. I have quoted ſome of them, in order to convince you that they have exiſted. Such, Sir, has been the nature of Iriſh Government. The ſketch which I have rapidly traced is faint: for a more perfect contour for the features, the colouring and the *effect*, I ſhall refer you to Ireland herſelf. It was by the enactment, and alſo by the enforcement of laws ſuch as I have deſcribed, that the Government of Ireland until the acceſſion of His preſent Majeſty endeavoured to diffuſe inſtruction, to inculcate morality, to preach Chriſtianity, to create attachment to property, to facilitate the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice, and thus to bind the people by a ſenſe of intereſt as well as of duty to its rule, to promote the general happineſs of its ſubjects, and the proſperity of the kingdom. On the penal laws I ſhall trouble you with no further comments. I will only aſk any reaſonable diſpaſſionate man, who having laid aſide all prejudice, has ſtudied impartially the hiſtory of Ireland, not in particular accounts written to ſerve the purpoſes of party, but by a general review of all the hiſtorical works which

have

have been publiſhed relating to that kingdom, and principally by a philoſophical attention to its laws, whether it be a matter of ſurpriſe, much leſs of reproach, if the Iriſh ſhould to ſome appear to be leſs informed, leſs humane, leſs moral, leſs civiliſed, leſs attached to order and government, than any other nation of Europe.

If I were to make harſh reflections on laws at length repealed, if I were to expreſs in ſtrong language my abhorrence of the ſyſtem formerly purſued in the Government of Ireland, I ſhould be juſtified, I am moreover encouraged by the ſolemn declarations of the Iriſh Legiſlature. I will refer you to the preambles of the ſtatutes (and they are many) paſſed during the preſent reign for the relief of the Roman Catholics. If I advert at all to the bloody and ſubverſive laws of former times, it is not to ſerve any malignant purpoſe, it is not to irritate, on the contrary to aſſuage; it is to repreſent in true colours what *have* been the ſufferings of the Iriſh nation, and to diſplay the peculiar virtues, the peculiar wiſdom of his preſent Majeſty in his perſon and in his Government. King of *Ireland* as well as of Great Britain, His Majeſty has repeatedly ſhewn himſelf

impreſſed

impreſſed with tender and parental ſolicitude for the happineſs of his Iriſh ſubjects; and under his auſpices the Roman Catholics of Ireland have experienced on ſeveral occaſions benignity and relief. To have broken notwithſtanding the many obſtacles oppoſed by fanatical bigotry a ſyſtem of ſuch barbarous oppreſſion, as that under which the Iriſh Catholic had ſo long laboured, at the ſame time that it does honour to the humane feelings of His Majeſty, reflects the brighteſt luſtre on his reign.

If however I may be permitted to reaſon as a Politician, and to comment upon the extent of the relief hitherto granted to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, I mean, to the Iriſh Nation, (ſince the Catholics avowedly and according to the admiſſions of their implacable enemies form its principal part), I muſt obſerve that the ſyſtem of the Popery Laws was ſuch as required to have been either *wholly* preſerved, or *wholly* repealed. The integral preſervation of a ſyſtem, which was ſuch, an outrage upon humanity, ſo repugnant to the merciful dictates of Chriſtian Philoſophy, ſo deſtructive to the civilization, to the commerce, to the agriculture, to the general proſperity of Ireland,

Ireland, (*in which the Britiſh Empire is ſo deeply concerned*) ſo prejudicial alſo to the morals and to the deareſt intereſts of ſociety, in the preſent days I am confident could never find an advocate, among men impartial, humane, and *diſintereſted*; among chriſtians, and eſpecially among real and not *pretended* enemies to French principles. On this part therefore of the alternative, I ſhall ſay no more.

To all half-meaſures I am a moſt decided enemy. Deviſed in general merely as momentary expedients to evade the immediate urgency of embarraſſment, they ſeldom produce even the deſired end; on the contrary, they generally increaſe the evils ſought to be remedied. Ireland may be adduced as a melancholy teſtimony, in elucidating the truth of this obſervation, common indeed, but deſerving attention. Had the very firſt Act of Parliament paſſed in favour of the Iriſh Catholic, ſwept away at once all religious diſtinction between the Proteſtant and the Catholic in regard to *civil rights*—had the great body of the country been at once admitted to a full participation of the benefits of the conſtitution as enjoyed by the people of Great Britain—had the Conſtitution of the

Iriſh Government been aſſimilated to that of Great Britain, not merely in *form*, but alſo in *ſpirit*.—Had ſuch meaſures been adopted, I am convinced, and my reaſons will appear in the ſequel, that Ireland would have been at this very moment content, unanimous, happy, enriched, and proſperous beyond example, and beyond the moſt flattering expectation. I am perſuaded moreover that her connection with Great Britain, inſtead of being as it now is, precarious, would have been moſt firmly eſtabliſhed, and might have defied every attack. But, alas! Sir, the Popery Laws have been repealed but *partially*, and the *partial* repeal of them, as muſt every half-meaſure, has ſerved not to remedy but to aggravate the miſerable condition of Ireland. It has tended merely to make the Catholics feel their oppreſſion more forcibly, and forget that they have been conſiderably relieved; It has rendered the remaining grievances leſs tolerable and more irritating. It has diſplayed to the public mind the greateſt abſurdity in the laws, ſince they have entirely deſtroyed *principles*, and have tenaciouſly preſerved *conſequences*. —They have annulled the *crime*, but have continued rigorouſly to inflict its *moſt ſevere*

puniſhment; they have, to uſe legal expreſſions, quaſhed the indictment, and have proceeded to execute the ſentence;—they have enabled the Catholics to acquire property it is true, but they have reſtrained them from the full and unreſtrained enjoyment of it; they have proclaimed them *good ſubjects,* they perſiſt in treating them as *traitors;* they have declared that the Catholics ought to be relieved from diſabilities impoſed upon them alone, and on no other deſcription of His Majeſty's ſubjects, and have continued a diſability peculiarly ſevere and degrading.* They have raiſed the expectation of the Catholic; they have encouraged his ambition to attain an equality of rights with the Proteſtant, and to the mortification of refuſal has been added the ſharp ſting of diſappointment. The Catholics of Ireland are not ſatisfied; and is it in human nature to *be* ſatisfied with ſuch parial relief?—They claim (*and their claims are founded on the expreſs declarations of the Iriſh Legiſlature*) the ſame rights enjoyed by all Diſſenters, however oppoſed to the eſtabliſhed church in faith, diſ-

* Vide Legal Arguments, page 53.

cipline, and government.* Since the removal of the moſt immediate reſtraints on the induſtry

* The only ground on which it has been attempted to ſupport the excluſion of the Catholics from the rights enjoyed by Diſſenters is, that they acknowledge a *ſpiritual authority* in the Pope—all *temporal or civil* authority whatever, direct or indirect in the Pope, as to theſe realms the Catholics have moſt ſolemnly abjured. By the repeated *teſts* which the Catholics have taken of allegiance to His Majeſty's perſon and government, and theſe *teſts* the reader is particularly requeſted to peruſe; they have fully demonſtrated, that the ſpiritual authority, which they acknowledge in the Pope, cannot interfere with their duties as ſubjects to the ſovereign and to the ſtate. By the laws of Great Britain and of Ireland, no ſubject is compellable to acknowledge any *ſpiritual authority* in the King. No Catholic, however, I think, would have any difficulty to ſwear, that the King is head ſupreme within theſe realms of the *Proteſtant reformed religion, eſtabliſhed by law.*

It is notorious that the Sectaries (I mean nothing inſiduous by the expreſſion) do not acknowledge the exiſtence of any *ſpiritual authority* whatever, either in the King or in any human perſon; and yet they are admitted in Ireland to all the rights of the Conſtitution, and the oaths were modified in England to relieve *their* conſcientious ſcruples. But if it be a founded objection to the admiſſion of Catholics that, the latter do not acknowledge the *ſpiritual authority* of his Majeſty, it muſt equally apply to Diſſenters.—The ſecond oath required of every Member of Parliament previouſly to voting on any queſtion or ſitting during a debate, is *improperly* called an oath of ſupremacy (Vide Legal Arguments, pages 14 and

induſtry of the Catholics, and ſince the acquiſition of a free trade—Ireland having recovered

14 and 50) and with the addition of a few words by no means impairing, but on the contrary *confirming* its ſtrength, would be taken by every Catholic in both kingdoms. That Diſſenters take a ſtronger teſt of allegiance than Catholics, I moſt poſitively deny; as I contend that the teſts which the Catholics have already taken, and which they are ſtill ready to take, are adequate to that contained in the oath, to the latter part of which they have ſcruples. This point I am prepared to argue on any occaſion, and with any perſon. I cannot, however, quit this ſubject, without adverting to a vulgar error, which ſeems to have gained ground in this country, as frequently occurs merely from its abſurdity. I have been ſeriouſly told by many perſons, that Catholics are not bound by their moſt poſitive engagements; that the Pope, or even the Prieſt may forgive ſin at pleaſure; grant indulgencies for the commiſſion of the moſt heinous crimes; abſolve from the moſt ſacred oath, and diſpenſe with the moſt ſolemn declaration—I am really ſurpriſed when I find ſuch ridiculous conceptions entertained even by enlightened legiſlatures. In every oath preſcribed to the Catholic, there is contained a clauſe abjuring all diſpenſation from the Pope, or from other perſons: But if ſuch a diſpenſing power were acknowledged by the Catholic, of what avail could be *any teſt* which ingenuity might deviſe? If ſuch a doctrine were an article of the Catholic faith, why do Catholics deprive themſelves from conſcientious motives of the great advantages which they might acquire by occaſional conformity? Why do they complain of laws which they might

covered in ſome degree her energies, and the far greater portion of her people, being at length enabled, as the author of the pamphlet expreſſes himſelf "to realize the earnings of induſtry," is become a *commercial nation*, and of that *commercial nation* the Catholics form, as you have juſtly obſerved, a *prodigious majority*.—Fortunes amaſſed in foreign kingdoms by Iriſh Catholic Emigrants, who had found in foreign kingdoms that protection and encouragement which the laws denied them in their native land, have been brought to Ireland and inveſted in the purchaſe of landed eſtates.—For the Iriſh Catholic, Sir, tho' till lately from his early years a wandering exile, looks back with peculiar fond attachment to his native home. The commerce of Ireland has within theſe few years moſt rapidly increaſed: its progreſs even in the preſent moment of confuſion is aſtoniſhing, and the property* of the Catholics

might ſo eaſily evade? Whence alſo would ariſe the neceſſity of the preſent diſcuſſion? Having put theſe queſtions, I think it will be unneceſſary for me to ſay more in refutation of ſuch an abſurd prejudice.

* I have frequently heard very reſpectable perſons in England

Catholics keeps pace with the growing proſperity of the Country. Now, Sir, with permiſſion I aſk the following queſtions: Were

England urge, as an objection to the admiſſion of the Iriſh Catholics to Parliament, that altho' they be conſiderably the majority in numbers, they are inferior to the Proteſtants in reſpect to property.—I grant the fact—they have further inſiſted that it would be dangerous to admit numbers in oppoſition to property—I agree in the principle, but I deny that it applies to the claims of the Irith Catholics. The Catholic claims in Ireland, when thoroughly inveſtigated, and impartially conſidered, will appear to be founded on the moſt genuine principles of *ariſtocracy*: they are built, not on the *rights of man*, but on the *rights of property* as eſtabliſhed by the laws of the Britiſh Monarchy—In forming our eſtimation of Catholic property in Ireland, we are generally miſled; we never take into conſideration the diſadvantages under which the induſtry of the country ſo long laboured; we never reflect on the *great Revolution* produced by the repeal of the Penal Laws; we never attend to the amazing progreſs of Iriſh Commerce during the laſt Fifteen Years. In a commercial country, and ſuch we muſt begin to conſider Ireland, property is by no means ſtationary. The encouragement and increaſe of commerce in Ireland has neceſſarily promoted the fluctuation of property.—The Catholics form the *prodigious majority* of the country; in proportion, as the Country becomes enriched, property naturally flows with aſtoniſhing rapidity into their poſſeſſion, and like all new purchaſers, they are ſolicitous to enjoy every right appertaining to their recent acquiſitions. From the enjoyment of the

moſt

Were it proclaimed to the merchants and traders of the Royal Exchange of London, and of the metropolis in general; to Briſtol, to Liverpool, to Birmingham, to Mancheſter, to Leeds, in ſhort, to the whole commercial body of Great Britain, that notwithſtanding all the efforts of their induſtry, not leſs profitable and honourable to themſelves than to the country—notwithſtanding their deep ſtake in the national proſperity—notwithſtanding the immenſity of their contributions to their public revenue—notwithſtanding the ſpirited zeal ſo eminently diſplayed by them on all occaſions in ſupport of his Majeſty's perſon and government—that notwithſtanding all theſe circumſtances, they muſt nevertheleſs bid adieu to all projects of laudable ambition, reſign their ſeats and the proſpect of ſeats in the Britiſh

moſt glorious appurtenances annexed to property, by the laws of Ireland they are debarred. Of ſuch laws they complain, and petition for the repeal of them as being unjuſt towards themſelves, prejudicial to the general welfare of the Country, and detrimental to the principles of the Conſtitution, by depriving property of its importance in the adminiſtration of Government. Such is the foundation of the Catholic claims in Ireland; and I will aſk any impartial man, with confidence—Whether ſuch claims be in the leaſt connected with Democracy?

Houſe

Houſe of Commons, and abandon for themſelves and for their families all hopes of future exaltation—that they muſt remain gratefully content with being permitted (and that permiſſion I will ſuppoſe not eaſily conceded) to enjoy the bare naked ſoil of the freehold deſpoiled of its moſt glorious appurtenances—that they muſt forego the pleaſing conſolatory deſire of contemplating in the evening of life their ſons and progeny, riſing as conſtellations on the political horizon, attracting the admiration and directing the hopes of the country—were the laws to hold this language to the people of Great Britain, permit me to aſk you, Sir, what would be the reſult? Should we glory in beholding as the diſtinguiſhed characteriſtics of our countrymen the ſame fervid induſtry, the ſame bold ſpirit of ſpeculation, the ſame zealous alacrity in ſupport of His Majeſty's Government, the ſame invincible attachment to its happy Conſtitution? Should we have to lament no murmurings, no repinings, no jealouſies, no animoſities? I leave the anſwer, Sir, to yourſelf, and to your profound knowledge of the feelings and paſſions of the human heart. Tranſport yourſelf then, Sir, for a moment to Ireland; viſit Dublin, Cork,

Waterford, and moſt of the ſea-ports of Ireland; ſurvey the whole country; recollect that it is a *commercial* country, and that a *majority* of that *commercial country* profeſs the Roman Catholic religion; open the Statute Book, read and reflect on the laws which it contains, and I am convinced that you will not be more ſevere on the Catholics of Ireland, than you would be upon the Proteſtants of Great Britain, if in the ſame circumſtances, and under a ſimilar ſyſtem of Government.

You aſk, "*what would be the conſequences if the Iriſh Catholics were once to gain aſcendancy in the National Councils?*" Sir, the author of the pamphlet to whom you have put the queſtion, does not contend, nor does he even expreſs a wiſh that the Catholics ſhould ever obtain in the Iriſh Parliament *aſcendancy*. His aim appears to have been to prove, that the Roman Catholics ought to be admitted to a participation of the rights engrafted on the poſſeſſion of property, enjoyed by all deſcriptions of His Majeſty's ſubjects, and withheld from Roman Catholics alone. He has reſted their claims ſolely upon the principles of exiſting laws, and upon the neceſſity of effacing from

the Statute Book the moſt glaring abſurdity. It is notorious, Sir, that were the Catholics admitted this very moment to the Iriſh Parliament, they could not gain, and I ſhall prove that they would not wiſh to gain in the National Councils, *aſcendancy*. The Houſe of Peers would continue in a manner wholly Proteſtant, ſince its *Members* who profeſs the Roman Catholic Religion, do not exceed the number of ſeven, and even in the Houſe of Commons the Catholics could not return a conſiderable number of Repreſentatives. The contingency therefore which you have ſuppoſed is ſo remote, that an anſwer to the queſtion in this ſhape would not apply to the preſent ſubject.

But, Sir, as you have put a queſtion reſpecting an *imaginary Catholic aſcendancy*, permit me to aſk you in return what are the conſequences actually enſuing from an *exiſting Iriſh Proteſtant aſcendancy?* Does it produce in Ireland induſtry, unanimity, content, morality, order, and all the bleſſings which we enjoy in Great Britain? Or does it create poverty, wretchedneſs, ſignorance, murmur, jealouſy, animoſity, rancour, diſaffection, and a ſpirit of diſorder? Does it promote harmony, and conciliate attachment

to Government? or does it hatch treaſon and inſtigate rebellion? *Aſcendancy*, Sir! I deteſt, I abhor the very word; it chills me with horror when I reflect on the profuſion of blood and tears which it has ſo often cauſed to flow. In a country like Great Britain, in a free and regular Government, it is unknown; and ſome of my readers may perhaps be embarraſſed to aſcertain its political import. *Aſcendancy* is a term appropriate to the tyrannic government of faction, and it is well adapted to the Conſtitutions of republican France, delivered over in the wiſdom and perhaps in the mercy of a juſt and offended God, to be the prey of contending factions, that ſhe may ſerve as a general correction of guilty Chriſtendom, and as a tremendous warning to Governors and governed of the dread puniſhment in ſtore for perſecution or for rebellion. In France—there, Sir, we may deſcant upon *aſcendancy*; but let us hear no more of it in a kingdom where every true friend of humanity and of ſociety muſt devoutly pray for the eſtabliſhment on a permanent baſis of peace, order, and good government.

If I have dwelt more than may have appeared neceſſary, or perhaps becoming on the word

word *aſcendancy*, be aſſured it has not been my intention to caſt the leaſt imputation on yourſelf, or on the expreſſion as uſed in your reſpectable and beneficial Review. Neither imagine, that I have deſigned to evade anſwering the ſubſtance of the fair queſtion which you have propoſed. I conceive it to be this. What would be the conſequences reſulting from the admiſſion of Roman Catholics in Ireland to the exerciſe of Parliamentary functions? I have no difficulty in giving an immediate reply. The admiſſion of the Catholics of Ireland to the full benefits of the Conſtitution, by which I underſtand the right when duly qualified in property of ſitting and voting in Parliament, would in itſelf reſtore harmony between the Proteſtant and the Catholic, and allay at once the religious animoſities which at preſent diſtract Ireland, by deſtroying the certain, the acknowledged cauſe from which they proceed.—What occaſions the preſent diſtracted ſtate of Ireland? The cauſe is ſimply this: The Iriſh Proteſtant, enjoying under the preſent ſeparate ſyſtem an *excluſive monopoly* of political conſequence, wiſhes (and it is natural) to preſerve the excluſive and incalculable advantages which he derives from

from it, by reaſon of circumſtances ſufficiently obvious. The Iriſh Catholic ſenſible of his merits, of his growing importance, and of his increaſing wealth, ſeeks (and it is alſo natural) participation. Hence ariſes a competition moſt fatal to the true intereſts of the country, and the cauſe of all her woes. It is this fatal competition, and it muſt ever *continue*, whether Ireland be governed under a *ſeparate* or *an incorporate* ſyſtem, until both the contending parties are put on the *ſame equal* footing, and then there will no longer exiſt a cauſe of quarrel—It is this fatal competition, I repeat, which ſhakes every principle of morality and of religion throughout the kingdom—deſtroys all ſocial intercourſe— diſturbs all public repoſe—perverts the moſt humane diſpoſitions, and renders them ferocious, ſanguinary, and tyrannical.

I mean not to offend, as I before obſerved, either Proteſtant or Catholic, but I *muſt* repreſent their reſpective ſituations: I *muſt* deſcribe the paſſions by which they are impelled—it is eſſential to the preſent inquiry; I will ſay more, it is eſſential to themſelves. To the Iriſh Catholic I entertain no prejudice, to the Iriſh Proteſtant I bear no animoſity.

ſity. In the happineſs of both, I feel the ſame concern; for on their mutual happineſs depend the deareſt intereſts of the Empire. Their errors I pardon, but I deplore the exiſtence of the ſources from which they ariſe.

The *Iriſh Proteſtant**, accuſtomed to look

* I muſt beg here to be underſtood. Let not any thing contained in this paragraph be applied to Iriſh Proteſtants indiſcriminately; it would be uncharitable, it would be moreover unjuſt. I ſpeak here of the Iriſh Proteſtant, not as to the Proteſtant religion, not as an individual, not as belonging to a religious deſcription, but as forming a *political party*. There are many, very many Iriſh Proteſtants, honourable, humane, religious men, who groan over the miſeries of their country, and are eager to relieve its woes: men poſſeſſing a deep ſtake in its proſperity, and well acquainted with its true intereſts; who view in the Catholics their fellow Chriſtians, in the people of Ireland their fellow ſubjects; men whoſe loyalty is unimpeachable, and bids defiance even to ſuſpicion; whoſe attachment to the Church is di played in their endeavours to render the religion which they profeſs reſpectable, by ſhowing it to be a religion of charity and of benevolence, not of perſecution or oppreſſion. Great men—who evince their zeal for the Sovereign and for the State, by the integrity and moderation of their Councils in the Cabinet and in the Senate-Houſe, or in the hour of danger by alacrity in the field of battle, where they emulate not the ſavage ferocity of the *blood-hound* or of the *tiger*, but the firm courage

look down from the *high* dominion of *aſcendancy* upon the *Catholic* with contempt, and to conſider him by reaſon of his former degraded ſituation, as a being of an inferior nature, as a *vile Iriſh Papiſt*, ſtares and is ſurpriſed, when he hears the *Catholic* pretend to an equality of privileges, and aſſert what the *Catholic* conſiders his undoubted *right*. In order to ſtifle the claims of the Iriſh Catholic, the Iriſh Proteſtant would procure, if poſſible, the re-enactment of the old ſyſtem of perſecution. He is well aware by *experience*, that the general miſery of the country (and it muſt naturally be increaſed by the adoption of ſuch a meaſure were it even in theſe days again practicable) will not affect *him*; on the contrary, that it can only ſecure, confirm, and advance *his* intereſts; he recollects, and it is ever preſent to his mind,

courage of the good ſubject, of the ſoldier, of men of honour. Of ſuch men it is impoſſible to ſpeak in other terms than thoſe of reſpect and affection. Wherever they be ſent, whether to ſubdue the rebellious ſubject, or to attack the foreign foe, they carry with them the hearts of the people, and the eſteem of the ſovereign. The claſs of men to whom I allude in this paragraph are of a deſcription different indeed, and if I have called them Proteſtants, it has been to ſhew the injuſtice of deſcribing *political* parties by *religious* denominations.

that

that the towering fabric of *aſcendancy* was reared and ſupported by the *oppreſſion of the country.*

Are theſe obſervations true or are they falſe?—am I grounded or deceived in my aſſertions? I will aſk the Iriſh Proteſtant himſelf—I will appeal to his own heart.—Is he not impreſſed with the ſame ſentiments? Does he not at times feel rankling in his breaſt the ſame ſecret deſire which I have aſcribed to him? Let him be candid—aye or no?—I will prove it, ſhould it be denied—I put the queſtion not with a view to reproach or to calumniate. I pardon his error.—He is placed in a ſituation of almoſt irreſiſtible temptation—he has to contend with what is moſt attached to fleſh and blood. And I remonſtrate with him in this manner, in order that the veil which conceals him to himſelf may be removed from before his eyes; that he may behold his real ſituation, and reflect upon the calamities which he would inflict upon his country, I may ſay upon himſelf. I beſeech him to ſtifle the reſentment which rages in his boſom, and which he knows is unprovoked—to lay aſide the rancour and malevolence which expoſe him to contempt, even where he would wiſh

to court eſteem; to liſten for a moment to the merciful dictates of charity; to become compaſſionate to the injured, the calumniated, the oppreſſed; and no longer to obſtruct the effuſions of royal benevolence emanating from that ſovereign to whom he profeſſes ſuch peculiar, if not *excluſive* loyalty, from being poured over the body of a diſtracted and bleeding kingdom.

The Catholic, on the other hand, honourably acquitted by the laws (and even by thoſe who formerly had pronounced him guilty) from the foul imputations under which he ſo long laboured, claims the reſpect, to which even from his long and patient ſufferings he conſiders himſelf entitled—he claims remiſſion of the ſentence declared to be unjuſt—he claims alſo performance of the ſolemn promiſes which he has repeatedly received, and in which he has confided—he is peremptorily and contumelioufly refuſed—he is diſappointed—he becomes irritated.

Enriched alſo by the increaſe of Iriſh commerce, his views extend*—his ambition is fired

* In a former note I endeavoured to ſhew, that the claims of the Catholics to relief, with reſpect to Parliamentary Oaths, are founded on principles of *Ariſtocracy*.

I ſhall

fired—he ſeeks the conſequence which he is told the laws have attached to the poſſeſſion of

I ſhall diſcuſs this point at greater length on a future occaſion. Admitted to the full enjoyment of *property* the Catholics will be anxious in its preſervation, and will be particularly intereſted in reſiſting dangerous innovations upon the old eſtabliſhed principles of the Conſtitution. To the queſtion of the admiſſion of the Iriſh Catholics to Parliament (and that is the meaning of what is commonly called Catholic emancipation) has been tacked a queſtion with which it is in no manner connected, I mean the queſtion of Parliamentary Reform. The Iriſh Catholics, to uſe a vulgar expreſſion, have been placed between *two fires*; they have had to contend with *Aſcendancy Men* on one ſide, with *Jacobin Emiſſaries* on the other; and both deſcriptions of their enemies have combined, to prevent them from attaining that redreſs ſo eſſential to the tranquillity and proſperity of Ireland. The *Aſcendancy Man* has wiſhed to continue the excluſion of the Catholics from motives of ſelf-intereſt, in order to engroſs all the *douceurs* of government in himſelf and in his party. In proportion therefore as the riches and conſequences of the Catholics increaſe, with the greater virulence he oppoſes their claims. Hence it has been adduced as an argument *againſt* the admiſſion of Catholics to the Iriſh Parliament, that, independently of ſuch admiſſion, they will become in time, with the proſperity of the country, poſſeſſed of the moſt conſiderable landed property in the kingdom. Vide "A *fair* Repreſentation of the preſent Political State of Ireland, page 26.—Vide alſo in the ſame pamphlet, page 133, Obſervations upon the Law

of property; but the ſame laws announce to him that he can acquire it on no other terms, than

of *Primogeniture.*" That law, though perhaps ſuſceptible of ſome modification, I have ever conſidered to be eſſential in a Monarchy, where ariſtocracy has an influence ſo extenſive and ſo ſalutary as in Great Britain. With the *Gentleman* who is the author of this work I am wholly unacquainted. I hope, however, that his *elaborate* performance will be carefully preſerved, tranſmitted to poſterity, and ſerve hereafter, as a diſtinguiſhed ſpecimen of the ſtate of *polite literature* in *Ireland*, towards the commencement of the *nineteenth* century of the *Chriſtian* æra. I ſhould have anſwered all the obſervations contained in this *elegant* compoſition, did I not hope that the taſk is in more able hands. I have therefore contented myſelf with indicating the paſſages to which I have referred, as teſts of *political orthodoxy*. To return, however, to the Jacobin: it would be extraordinary indeed if he failed to take advantage of the many circumſtances, which in Ireland combine to flatter him with ſucceſs in his endeavours to introduce confuſion. He has been well aware, that were the grievances of the country once redreſſed his hopes would be blaſted, and that he would experience the ſame ſcorn from the Iriſhman, with which he has been treated by the Briton. Accordingly he has pretended to eſpouſe in Ireland the Catholic cauſe, at the ſame time that he is in his heart its deadly foe. The Jacobin has endeavoured to join queſtions of a very different nature to Catholic emancipation; the *Aſcendancy Man* has done the ſame: both have acted from the worſt motives, with the view of excluding the Catholics from

that

than by apoſtatiſing from the religion of his conſcience; from that religion whoſe truths are deeply engraven on his heart, and to which he is peculiarly attached—that he can attain full capacity to ſerve his Sovereign and his Country by no other means, than by pretending to embrace a religion which he interiorly diſbelieves, by the baſeſt hypocriſy, and by a dereliction of every ſentiment that can enſure *political*, as well as private virtue.

Such, Sir, is the language proclaimed by the laws of Ireland to a "*prodigious majority*" of the nation. Reflect upon it ſeriouſly as a politician, and as a chriſtian. I never can congratulate the Church of Ireland, nor any church whatever, on converts obtained either by the terror of civil puniſhment, or by the enticements of earthly rewards, by pains and penalties, in ſhort, by Penal Laws. They can convert in *any* coun-

that conſequence, which at the ſame time that it would facilitate in Ireland the adminiſtration of government, would enſure the oppoſition of the country to French principles. As to Parliamentary Reform, I ſhall aſſert and intend on a future occaſion to prove, that it will never be the intereſt of the Iriſh Catholics once admitted to Parliament, to render the Houſe of Commons democratical, but on the contrary to preſerve the preſent ſyſtem of repreſentation.

try,

try, whether *Proteſtant* or *Catholic*, only to profligacy or to impiety, or to abſolute atheiſm; never Sir, never, to the law of Chriſt. The law of Chriſt operates by charity, by mildneſs, by perſuaſion; ſuch were the means of religious converſion adopted by the Saviour of Man, and ſuch they were preſcribed by him to his Apoſtles, to the princes and rulers of the earth. Perſecution, whether barbarous or refined, I conſider as expreſſly contrary to that goſpel, which is the foundation of the Catholic, as well as of the Proteſtant religion.—What has been in Ireland, Sir, the ſucceſs of the Popery Laws? they have made apoſtates, they have ſhaken perhaps the fundamental principles of all religion throughout the kingdom—have they produced one ſincere diſtintereſted convert? We know that they have not, and the Legiſlature of Ireland, itſelf expreſſly informs us, that after the labour of a century in endeavouring to eradicate the national religion, the laws againſt Popery "*have not anſwered the deſired effect**,"

Sir, the Catholic whom I have juſt repreſented to you, receives additional mortifica-

* St. 21, Geo. III. c. 62.

tion

tion when he peruſes the liſts of the great officers of ſtate—when he caſts his eyes around both Houſes of Parliament—when he perambulates the ſeats of exalted majeſtracy—and when he reflects that they are filled with many, who but yeſterday were in a ſituation inferior to himſelf; whoſe claims and pretenſions were leſs meritorious than his; with ſome alſo, born and educated *vile Iriſh Papiſts* like himſelf, and who enjoy the higheſt honours, the moſt exalted dignities, the moſt lucrative employments; merely as the rewards of apoſtacy, and perhaps of diſtinguiſhed virulence againſt the religious communion which they may have abandoned, not from conviction, but from motives moſt ſelfiſh and depraved.

Sir, the Catholic reflects on all theſe circumſtances—they all contribute to wound him to the very ſoul—His natural vivacity forſakes him—he becomes gloomy and ſullen and diſcontented. Rank, honours, diſtinctions, from the enjoyment of which he is excluded, loſe their attraction and reſpect. Property, deprived in *his* poſſeſſion of its moſt brilliant advantages, becomes leſs dear to him; and the laws he is prone to conſider as iniquitous, abſurd, contemptible, odious*.

odious*. Such, Sir, is the lamentable evil reſulting from the infatuation (for it muſt be

* In France, the monied men and the commercial intereſt were the foremoſt among the abettors of the revolution: in Great Britain the ſame claſs of ſubjects have diſplayed particular attachment to the conſtitution of the Government, and have been diſtinguiſhed by firm oppoſition to democratical principles. Whence proceeds this difference of conduct? Moſt clearly from the great difference between the laws of the two kingdoms. The French Monarchy has been ruined by its attention to commerce. To France, commerce ought never to be the ſame primary object which it muſt always be to Great Britain. Accordingly the laws and the ſpirit of the French Monarchy gave not that *dignity* to the commercial character, which it has ever enjoyed in Great Britain, even from the earlieſt periods of our hiſtory. Within, I believe it muſt now be called, the laſt century, the French Monarchy departed conſiderably from its ancient ſyſtem; it wiſhed, moſt unfortunately for itſelf, to increaſe its commerce, but it was not able, nor perhaps willing, to alter the *excluſive* laws or rather excluſive ſpirit, which denied to the *commercial parvenu*, the conſideration and the importance enjoyed by the *Britiſh Merchant*. The former, in conſequence of excluſion, became impreſſed with the ſame feelings which I have aſcribed to the Iriſh Catholic. It muſt however be obſerved, that the excluſion operated by the laws of Ireland, is far more ſevere than the excluſion which under the Monarchy prevailed in France. In France, the ſucceſsful Merchant might purchaſe *letters of Nobility*, and though he did not derive any great conſideration from the

ſo called) which continues to exclude the prodigious majority of the people of Ireland from the rights of the conſtitution, enjoyed univerſally by the people of Great Britain. This alarming evil cannot any longer remain unheeded: it *muſt* be cured, and the *remedy* muſt be effectual. Palliatives can be of no avail. They have already *irritated*—applied once more, they will produce *mortification*. It is no longer permitted to ſpeculate on abſtract theories, or to conſume moments that are moſt precious, in contriving dilatory and dubious experiments. We *muſt* admit the people of Ireland to the ſame *rights of property* enjoyed by the people of Great Britain.

new acquiſition himſelf, ſtill however he had the ſatisfaction to be aſſured, that his deſcendants would enjoy all its advantages, and might become capable of holding the higheſt employments in the State. It is otherwiſe in Ireland:—and in a country where it is eſſential to encourage commerce, and where the Government aſſumes the *form* of the Britiſh Conſtitution, the Catholic forming the great majority of the Nation, is excluded from all conſiderable advancement. The laws oppoſe to him and to his family a *perpetual* bar ſurmountable only by breach of conſcience, and they leave him the diſconſolate reflection that he can riſe no higher, not even attain the full enjoyment of his induſtrious exertions, nor ſerve, at the ſame time, his King, his Country, and his God.

Such an admiſſion is the only antidote to the bane of French principles. It is the only balm which can be infuſed into the wounds of Ireland, and it muſt be applied before every ſentiment of loyalty be extinct—before every principle of religion be wholly ſubverted—and before the whole country be completely Jacobinized. Each day's delay tends only to aggravate the miſerable condition of the country, to increaſe the danger to which the very exiſtence of government and ſociety is hourly expoſed. The flames of Jacobiniſm have been for a moment repreſſed: they are only ſmothered, they are not extinguiſhed—the *focus* is contained in the bowels of the *law*, and it is by the law alone that it can ever be deſtroyed. What a little would inſure the happineſs of Ireland! Let but a ſingle ſtatute, a ſtatute paſſed in England and not in Ireland*, be repealed, or merely modified, and the country will be at once as tranquil, as united, as happy as Great Britain. The Proteſtant will no longer view

* St. 3, W. M. c. 2. Vide Legal Arguments, p. 48. This act was confirmed in 1782; otherwiſe it would be at preſent of no effect. The *legal* excluſion of the Catholics from Parliament ſhould therefore be dated from that epoch.

the

the Catholic with ſuſpicion, with diſtruſt, and with contemptuous hatred: the Catholic will no longer glance at the Proteſtant with that jealous animoſity which his preſent ſituation naturally inſpires in him, when he reflects on his diſparity with reſpect to *civil rights*. Admitted to a full participation of the peculiar advantages conferred by the *ſublime* conſtitution of the Britiſh Monarchy; the Iriſh Catholic will venerate, will ſtrenuouſly ſupport it, not only from a ſenſe of moral and religious duty, but of affection, and of intereſt. Allowed to enjoy, in common with his neighbour, the conſequence ſo wiſely engrafted, as I ever repeat, on the poſſeſſion property, he will become as peculiarly *attached* to property as the *Engliſhman* himſelf—he will be ſenſible of its full value, and of its importance in the government of ſociety—he will be then aware how intimately it is connected with public order, to what danger it is expoſed, by whatever tends to introduce confuſion. He will therefore be ſolicitous to preſerve eſtabliſhments—he will deprecate the introduction of democracy into the conſtitution of Government, as leading to its ſubverſion, and with his Proteſtan brother whom he will no longer have cauſe

to

to envy or to hate, he will live in amity, in charity, and in peace. The Government will no longer have occaſion from fear and apprehenſion of the majority of its ſubjects, to be fortifying itſelf within the caſtle and Parliament-houſe of Dublin as if expoſed to conſtant ſiege; it will no longer conſider the people of Ireland as its deadly foes, or as vowing its deſtruction--it will find in them its warmeſt friends—its firmeſt ſupport—its bleſſings diffuſed over the whole face of the country, and communicated to all its ſubjects without partiality or excluſion, ſhall cauſe joy and gladneſs to prevail, and the people ſhall exult in their King and in the Laws.

THE END

SAMPSON LOW, Printer, Berwick Street, Soho.